

Message Text

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ACTION SIL-01

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BRUSSELS FOR USEC

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: ELAB, ICFTU, JA
SUBJECT: TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKERS DECIDE TO AFFILIATE
WITH ICFTU

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. AT ITS ANNUAL CONVENTION EARLIER
THIS MONTH, 330,000 MEMBER COUNCIL OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
WORKERS (ZENDENTSU), SOHYO'S THIRD LARGEST AFFILIATE,
FORMALLY DECIDED BY OVER 4 TO 1 VOTE TO JOIN INTERNATIONAL
CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU). END
UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. WHILE DECISION HAD BEEN
EXPECTED AND CONSEQUENTLY ATTRACTED LITTLE MEDIA ATTENTION,
ZENDENTSU PRESIDENT OIKAWA IN MEETING LAST WEEK WITH
VISITING AFL-CIO PRESIDENT SHANKER EMPHASIZED THAT HIS
ORGANIZATION'S AFFILIATION WITH ICFTU WAS CLEAR EVIDENCE
THAT, WITHIN SOHYO, SUPPORTERS OF WESTERN FREE TRADE
UNION PRINCIPLES WERE GAINING STRENGTH. OIKAWA AND PTI
JAPAN OFFICE DIRECTOR HATSUOKA (WHO PLAYED KEY ROLE IN
BUILDING UP NECESSARY PRO-ICFTU CONSENSUS AMONG ZENDENTSU
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RANK AND FILE) NOTED THAT IN JAPAN ICFTU AFFILIATION
CLEARLY IDENTIFIES UNION AS BELONGING TO ANTI-COMMUNIST
CAMP. OIKAWA ADDED THAT HIS RECENT ELECTION AS VICE
PRESIDENT OF SOHYO AND PROBABLE DESIGNATION AS CHAIRMAN
OF SOHYO'S INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE WOULD INCREASE
STRENGTH OF MODERATES ON SOHYO'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND
ENCOURAGE SOHYO'S PRESIDENT MAKIEDA TO CONTINUE HIS

PURSUIT OF NEW DIALOGUE WITH AFL-CIO AND OTHER WESTERN UNIONS. SHANKER ENCOURAGED OIKAWA (WHO INDICATED HE WAS PLANNING TO ATTEND PTI CONVENTION IN WASHINGTON IN MID-OCTOBER) ALSO TO JOIN SOHYO DELEGATION SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH GEORGE MEANY THIS FALL.

3. COMMENT: ZENDENTSU'S FORTHCOMING AFFILIATION WILL MARK FIRST MAJOR MEMBERSHIP GAIN FOR ICFTU IN JAPAN SINCE DOMEI DECIDED TO AFFILIATE AT ITS FOUNDING CONVENTION IN 1964. IT ALSO GIVES ICFTU ITS SIXTH AFFILIATE FROM AMONG SOHYO MEMBER UNIONS, OTHERS BEING POSTAL WORKERS (ZENTEI), MUNICIPAL TRANSPORT WORKERS (TOSHI KOTSU), COAL MINERS (TANRO), METAL MINERS (ZENKO) AND WORKERS OF GOVERNMENT OWNED NHK RADIO AND TELEVISION NETWORK (NIPPORO). IRONICALLY, SMALL MINORITY IN DOMEI, PRINCIPALLY OFFICERS OF RUMP POSTAL WORKERS UNION (ZENYUSEI), HAVE URGED DOMEI LEADERSHIP TO BLOCK ZENDENTSU AFFILIATION WITH ICFTU UNTIL AND UNLESS ZENDENTSU AND ZENTEI DROP THEIR LONG-STANDING OPPOSITION TO ZENYUSEI AFFILIATION WITH PTI. WE UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT DOMEI LEADERSHIP WILL NOT WORK ACTIVELY TO OPPOSE ZENDENTSU MEMBERSHIP IN ICFTU. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. MANSFIELD

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